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No. 4265.287

GIVEN BY

Family of Wm. Lloyd Garrison.

1852

Forbidding Faneuil Hall to the Abolitionists.

City Document—No. 48.

CITY OF BOSTON.

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FANEUIL HALL.

In the Board of Mayor and Aldermen,

September 21, 1852.

Ordered to be printed.

Attest:

S. F. McCleary, Jr., *City Clerk.*

Family of
William Lloyd Garrison,
July 8, 1899.

4265.287

To the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Boston.

GENTLEMEN:

The undersigned legal voters respectfully request that the use of Faneuil Hall be granted for *ten days* commencing on the 14*th of December next*, for the purpose of holding a Fair therein for the benefit of the Anti-Slavery cause.

FRANCIS JACKSON and 105 others.

We, the undersigned, legal voters in the City of Boston, do respectfully petition his Honor, the Mayor, and the Honorable Board of Aldermen that we may be allowed the free use of Faneuil Hall during the *last week of December next* or about that time, for the purpose of holding a *fair* for the benefit of a Charitable Institution, known as and called "The House of the Angel Guardian"—and your petitioners will ever pray.

JOHN B. FITZPATRICK,
Bishop of Boston, and 100 others.

CITY OF BOSTON.

In Board of Mayor and Aldermen, Sept. 20, 1852.

The Committee on Public Buildings on the part of this Board to whom were referred the petition of Francis Jackson and others for the use of Faneuil Hall for TEN days from the 14th of December next, for the purpose of holding an ANTI-SLAVERY FAIR therein:—and the petition of John B. Fitzpatrick and others for the use of said Hall for SEVEN days from the 25th day of December to the first of January succeeding, for the purpose of holding therein a FAIR for the benefit of the "House of the Angel Guardian"—having considered the subject, respectfully

REPORT:

That the original purpose, for which the Hall was granted to the town of Boston, was, that the citizens might *always* have a suitable place wherein to hold their annual and other *meetings* for the election of town officers and the discussion of the political topics of the day.

For this purpose it was used from the day of its donation to the town in 1742, up to the period of the establishment of the City Government in 1822, having been occasionally granted for drilling the troops during the war, or for a Corporation dinner.

Under the City Government a similar course has been pursued, but within the last six years the use of the

Hall has been also extended to parties and societies, whose objects and aims were entirely disconnected, and often at variance with the obvious and proper intentions of the original grant: and this promiscuous granting of the Hall to private parties and charitable fairs had become productive of so much detriment to the building that it arrested the attention of our immediate predecessors—and accordingly that Board endeavored towards the close of the year to restrict the Hall to its original and intended purposes:—and, accordingly, it appears from the records of the last year, that the use of the Hall was refused to one of your present petitioners and his associates for the purpose of holding an Anti-Slavery Fair therein. In this determination your Committee fully concur.

The Hall has recently been fitted up and permanently adapted for the purpose, principally, of holding *Political Meetings* therein, and the use of the Hall ought to be confined, as far as possible, to this, its legitimate object, and for which no other building in the City is so suitable either in point of its ancient associations or its present conveniences.

We hold, moreover, that *Faneuil Hall*, like the *Common*, belongs to the *citizens* of Boston, and it may well be doubted if any parties or societies can so control the building for a *single* day, *even under the sanction of this Board*, as to forbid one of those citizens from entering the Hall except on the *payment of a fee* or the *purchase of a ticket.*

If the authority of the Board to grant such a privilege for a *day* may be questioned—the extension of such a privilege for a *week* should never be permitted except in cases of *great* and *peculiar*, or *universal interest.*

Suppose, for instance, the prayers of these petitioners be granted, then, from the 14th day of December to the

first of the succeeding January, (a period of *three consecutive weeks*) the control of the Hall will be beyond the keeping of the Board, during which period it may be wanted many times by the citizens, for the legitimate purposes of its donation, and if the Hall be occupied by the various articles and materials which usually constitute a "Fair," the citizens will be compelled to seek some other, unusual and inconvenient place for their meetings.

The Board will readily perceive that if the Hall be granted to one society for the purpose of holding a Fair therein, it cannot with propriety be withheld from others who seek it for similar purposes; it therefore seems to your Committee that all such applications should be discountenanced, especially as there are in the City so many buildings and places, which combine a more central situation with greater and better facilities of access for fairs than Faneuil Hall.

It is therefore recommended that the petitioners have *leave to withdraw.*

Your Committee are aware that, by their action, they must disappoint the wishes of a large number of respectable petitioners, but they trust that the impartial discrimination, which they intend to exercise in the consideration of all applications for the use of Faneuil Hall, will meet the approbation of the Board, and of the citizens generally.

For the Committee,

JOHN P. OBER, *Chairman.*

Read and accepted

Attest, S. F. McCleary, Jr., *City Clerk.*